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Chairman: Mr. da Costa ..... (Portugal)
later: Mr. Barnwell (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Guyana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Organization of work

1. **The Chairman** suggested that, rather than taking up agenda item 106 (Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries) at the end of the current month, the Committee should postpone its consideration of the agenda item to a later date because a ministerial meeting of the least developed countries had been planned for that same period.

2. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 99: Operational activities for development

(a) Triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/56/70-E/2001/58, A/56/70/Add.1-E/2001/58/Add.1, A/56/70/Add.2-E/2001/58/Add.2, A/56/174, A/56/320 and Add.1)

(b) Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (A/56/39, A/56/134 and Add.1, A/56/465)

3. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs), introducing the agenda item, said that the current triennial comprehensive policy review was taking place at a critical juncture in development cooperation and should be the occasion for a thorough stock-taking of implementation of the guidance provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/192, relating to a full examination of the basic factors which had affected that process. It should also provide an opportunity for the international community to reflect on the challenges which development cooperation would face in coming years, in the light of the impact of the events of 11 September 2001, in particular with regard to world growth and resources for development.

4. The report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive review (A/56/320) contained 20 general policy recommendations which were the result of a wide-ranging assessment of operational activities and also took full account of the views expressed by Member States at the July 2001 session of the Economic and Social Council. They covered a number of issues, including both traditional themes relating to field-level coordination and newer questions on the role of the system in assisting developing countries to seize the opportunities and meet the difficult challenges arising from globalization. They also dealt with such fundamental concerns as resources for operational activities, national ownership and capacity-building.

5. The report made a number of proposals for strengthening the coordination of activities at the country level, with special emphasis on evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and common country assessments (CCAs). In the area of field-level coordination, the theme of simplification and harmonization of procedures deserved special attention. There were heightened concerns about the transaction costs for recipient countries generated by the United Nations system's operational activities, especially as the trend in resources for operational activities continued to be worrisome, in spite of the efforts of several donor agencies. Renewed efforts were also required to make progress in the area of common premises and shared services, decentralization and improvement of the resident coordinator system.

6. An innovative aspect of the 2001 report was its emphasis on the implications for United Nations development assistance of the challenges that developing countries faced in a continuously changing global environment.

7. Questions that needed to be addressed in that regard were whether the system provided recipient countries with the assistance that the new challenges demanded; how the system could best use the skills and potential available to it for building the capacity of programme countries; and the implications of that new context for the oversight that the United Nations intergovernmental bodies were called upon to exercise over operational activities. Moreover, the means of mobilizing the requisite resources should also be considered. The Economic and Social Council could play a useful role in that regard by insuring that the United Nations system optimized its response to the complex demands generated by the new international environment. The report also considered ways in which the Council could best play its mandated role to coordinate and guide operational activities for development. Renewed attention should be given to modalities that could better exploit the Council's comparative advantage as a unique forum where all partners came together to discuss issues related to

development cooperation in its broadest sense. There was also scope for looking at modalities for strengthening the Council's capacity to carry out in-depth evaluations of the impact of international assistance.

8. In order to meet the complex challenges facing the international community, institution-based oversight mechanisms remained essential; they must be accompanied by overall policy guidance. The report under review reiterated the concern regarding the situation of resources for operational activities for development. In that regard, he hoped that the triennial policy review would help promote consensus on the financing of United Nations activities for development cooperation.

9. At its substantive session of 2001, the Economic and Social Council had repeatedly stressed the need to increase coordination of operational activities of the United Nations and to ensure full national ownership of development cooperation programmes. External assistance should not generate separate development structures or initiatives; instead, it should be fully integrated into national endeavours under the leadership and monitoring of national authorities, since it was the governments of recipient countries that had the ultimate responsibility for national development. That basic guideline required the United Nations system to develop new action strategies that took into account the interdependence between global and national dimensions, the central objective being to maximize responsiveness to national priorities.

10. The development assistance provided by the United Nations system should aim at a much closer integration with national development policies and programmes under the leadership and with the full participation of the government. In that regard, a key objective underlying the recommendations on the further strengthening of the modalities and mechanisms introduced in the course of past reforms was to gear them to maximize their contribution as instruments not only of internal coordination but also of integration into national processes. More broadly, the aim was to refocus efforts on concrete achievements in development terms, capacity-building and national ownership.

11. *Mr. Barnwell (Guyana), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

12. **Ms. Ba-N'Daw** (Director, Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries), introducing the two reports on South-South Cooperation (A/56/39 and A/56/465), said that the two documents made a strong case for South-South cooperation as a strategy to make globalization more inclusive. The report of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries analysed progress achieved in that area and stressed the growing importance of TCDC in emerging partnerships, alliances and networking arrangements where Governments, organizations and individuals were working together to eradicate poverty and improve peoples' living conditions.

13. Aware of the current importance of knowledge, the High-Level Committee stressed, at its twelfth session, the role of South-South cooperation in science and technology for development and expressed the view that finding scientific solutions to development challenges contributed to the prosperity of the developing world. The scope of technical cooperation among developing countries, which had previously been limited to regional exchanges, now included inter-regional interactions, for example between Africa and Asia or Africa and Latin America. TCDC activities could make a big difference in people's lives if they were focused on strategic areas such as human resources development. In practical terms, TCDC made visible contributions to development goals through new South-South partnerships. Middle-income countries assumed a lead role in that area. They played a coordinating role by opening their training institutions and other facilities to partners from other parts of the developing world.

14. South-South cooperation had become a more inclusive process that was attractive to development partners from the North. Various developed countries had thus supported capacity-building initiatives, institutional development and networks in the South through triangular arrangements, especially in the area of research and development. The United Nations system supported TCDC by backing capacity-building through the coordination of institutions and centres of excellence in the South, making it possible for such centres to share experience and conduct joint research. The United Nations Development Programme had moved beyond its role as the main source of funding for TCDC to become a South-South knowledge broker.

15. The report on the state of South-South cooperation (A/56/465) revealed a number of encouraging patterns in trade, investment and the monetary and financial spheres. However, though trade among developing countries had grown considerably, the erratic nature of global financial flows had resulted in irregular patterns of trade between and within regions. The international community, therefore, needed to work more to improve the global financial architecture.

16. There was a growing impetus towards regional economic integration, which created large trading zones attractive to investors, as in Asia, the region that was also the leader in generating South-South investment flows. South-South economic cooperation continued to be a framework for finding solutions to common problems. Recent financial crises had thus generated interest in monetary and financial cooperation among developing countries at the regional and subregional levels.

17. One major issue highlighted by the report under discussion was the practice among developing countries of formulating declarations of intent and impressive plans of action that lacked effective implementation mechanisms.

18. The Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, despite its very limited human and financial resources, was committed to working more closely with all Member States and with its United Nations sister organizations in promoting South-South cooperation in the twenty-first century. It was hoped that the Second Committee would provide guidance and be a source of inspiration.

19. **Ms. Heyzer** (Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)) said that the world community, despite its acknowledgement that gender equality was a prerequisite for development and peace, too often failed to act on that basis, and thus disasters were created. There was awareness, for example, that women were more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, but no action had been taken on the basis of that knowledge. Infection rates among women and girls were far higher than those for men. It was known that war, armed conflict and displacement affected women and girls differently. Yet refugee camps not incorporating the safety and health measures that would protect them from psychological trauma and economic hardship continued to be set up. It was also known that the way a country treated women and promoted their human rights was one of the best indicators of its respect for international norms. Yet the requisite measures to put an end to massive violations of those rights were not being taken.

20. It was not enough to set standards to promote women's fundamental rights; it was essential also to ensure their prompt translation into practice. For that purpose, the tools for monitoring compliance with the standards set must be strengthened. More than 120 countries had developed national plans of action for the advancement of women, and more than 165 had signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Yet laws discriminating against women proliferated and violence against women seemed to be on the rise in all spheres. Innovative tools of accountability were being developed and should be available to all. In that connection, mention should be made of gender budgeting, which involved the analysis of Government expenditure and revenue relating to women as compared with men. Gender budget analysis helped Governments decide where resources needed to be reallocated to achieve gender equality and made it possible to link commitments made in respect of instruments such as the Beijing Platform for Action to the distribution and use of public resources. Such analysis was rooted in country-based experience. It was a goal of UNIFEM that all countries should undertake gender-sensitive budget analysis by 2015.

21. There was a need for strengthened commitments to implementation. A growing number of common country assessments (CCAs) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) reflected a commitment to gender equality.

22. The increasing number of agreements formalized by UNIFEM with its United Nations partners was a good example of the United Nations coordination effort and commitment in the area of gender equality. Its partnerships with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund were expanding. Its cooperation with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS was also a good example of the use of UNIFEM expertise to infuse gender concepts into the operational activities of all partners.

23. The Millennium development goals had highlighted specific commitments having the potential to improve the lives of millions of people. Like human rights, however, those goals were indivisible, particularly for women and girls. Gender equality could not be achieved unless feminized poverty was reduced. Parity in school enrolment was unattainable without a reduction in the incidence of HIV/AIDS, since it was girls who were removed from school to care for family members who were ill. Mainstreaming gender into each of those goals was linked to the ability to achieve all of them.

24. An important facet of the promotion of gender equality was the elimination of cultural and behavioural obstacles to United Nations collaboration with Governments and women's organizations and to the implementation of agreed norms and standards. That was perhaps nowhere more evident than in the work on ending violence against women. At both the local and national levels, however, the strategies implemented by the United Nations were beginning to make a difference. It was essential, therefore, to continue the efforts to eliminate those obstacles and to reduce gender-based violence. Those were the key priorities which UNIFEM had set for its future work, with a view to ending the multiple forms of violence that women confronted daily, despite the many agreements condemning the phenomenon.

25. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, thanked the Secretary-General for the quality of the reports submitted under the agenda item. Due to their universal, neutral, multilateral and grant character, the operational activities of the United Nations system had always been very close to the heart of developing countries, who viewed them as the concrete manifestation of the real mission of the United Nations in the field of development.

26. However, the context within which United Nations development cooperation had been operating had changed substantially during the last decade. While the ongoing globalization process offered new opportunities, it also posed serious challenges, particularly for developing countries. Thus, there had been a significant increase in income inequalities within and among rich and the poor countries, official development assistance and multilateral development cooperation had been either stagnant or in decline despite the fiscal health of many donor countries, and bilateral mechanisms were increasingly being substituted for ODA. During the same period, thanks to a series of major United Nations conferences, a global consensus had emerged on a variety of development objectives together with timetables for their implementation. It was regrettable that a global consensus had not emerged on the mobilization of the financial resources required for such action and, under pressure from the current new trends, which had also transformed the needs of developing countries struggling with globalization, it was more difficult for the funds and programmes, themselves facing declining resources, to respond more effectively to the economic and social impact of globalization, promote the development of the poorer countries and assist them to better integrate into the global economy.

27. The Group of 77 and China believed that poverty eradication should continue to be the major pillar of operational activities of the United Nations system, which could play a major role, especially through supporting capacity-building. However, the United Nations seemed to be hampered by declining financial resources at both the multilateral and national levels. Therefore, adequate international assistance, both financial and technical, as well as a stable international financial system should be ensured. Moreover, developing countries should be assisted in mobilizing more resources through various measures including access to developed country markets, debt relief and increased private capital flows, particularly foreign direct investment. At the national level, higher economic growth rates and a climate that was more conducive to the mobilization of local resources should be promoted. Moreover, country ownership of the programmes and projects should be ensured. To that end, and with a view to playing a central role in the formulation of their overall national development strategy, programme countries should be involved in all phases of designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development programmes and projects.

28. In that regard, it was essential to ensure that funding for United Nations operational activities for development, in particular regular and core resources, was sufficient, secure, stable and on a more predictable basis if the increasing needs of developing countries were to be effectively addressed. Core and regular resources constituted the bedrock of the operational activities of the United Nations system; they allowed the funds and programmes to follow the development

targets agreed multilaterally. However, ODA had been declining steadily during the 1990s, while earmarked and non-core funding had grown. The Group of 77 and China found that situation extremely disquieting due, in particular, to the fact, as the Secretary-General had noted, that the impact of aid could not be separated from the availability of core or regular resources. Moreover, the allocation of more resources to short-term emergency activities to the detriment of long-term activities was yet another trend that had an adverse impact on the development of countries in crisis. Progress towards the establishment of multi-year funding frameworks had raised expectations that contributions to the core resources would increase; however, there had not been any major changes in the resource situation of the United Nations operational activities for development. Therefore, a strong political commitment to the common development objectives set at the major conferences and by the Millennium Summit would be needed in order to address the shortage of core resources.

29. In the area of operational activities for development, the United Nations system had set itself the objectives of achieving greater coherence and coordination in its interventions by ensuring that they were country-driven and were in line with national development priorities. The Group of 77 and China wished to stress the need for national authorities to coordinate all external assistance and development activities and to be fully involved in all phases of the preparation of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, thus enhancing the collective identity of the country teams and national ownership of the processes and ensuring that programme countries would not be penalized through excessive transaction costs.

30. Turning to the involvement of the United Nations system in humanitarian assistance, including natural disasters and post-crisis situations, which had expanded during the past decade and were likely to pose a serious challenge to the international community in the future, he said that the United Nations funds and programmes should assist recipient countries according to their national economic and social needs, including for poverty eradication, humanitarian assistance, the promotion of human rights, particularly the right to development, with a view to achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and the outcomes of the major conferences as well as the Millennium Declaration. It should be recalled, however, that the phases of relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development were generally not consecutive; rather, they often overlapped and occurred simultaneously. Therefore, there was a need for an early application of development tools in humanitarian emergencies. National authorities and institutions should have a lead role in that regard.

31. At the current critical juncture in the rapidly changing world economic situation, there was clear recognition of the need for economic and technical cooperation among all countries, especially developing countries, with a view to creating a more equitable international economic system that would ensure a better future for humanity. International cooperation for development had been steadily relegated to a lower priority on the agenda of the international community, a situation that needed to be redressed on an urgent basis. There was a need for a new global human order aimed at reversing the trend of growing disparities between rich and poor, based on the principles of shared benefits and common but differentiated responsibilities. That international effort needed to be complemented with South-South cooperation, which, as emphasized by the South Summit, held in Havana in 2000, constituted an effective instrument for optimizing the potential of developing countries through the mobilization and sharing of existing resources and expertise and thus promoting growth and achieving self-reliance in and among developing countries. The Secretary-General, in his report, had reviewed South-South cooperation in the areas of trade, investment and monetary and financial arrangements. Trade among developing countries had been growing in recent years, especially at the intraregional level, due to notable changes in various regional agreements. Despite the establishment of the World Trade Organization, all countries seemed to consider that regional trade agreements were still a better means of overcoming barriers to trade than multilateral agreements. Progress in regional integration had also contributed to the growth of foreign direct investment among developing countries. Market proximity, similarity of products and processes and business culture affinities encouraged those countries to invest in their own region. South-South monetary and financial cooperation had also gained momentum since the 1997 Asian crisis.

32. The Havana Summit had been an important milestone in a long process which had begun in 1981 with the Caracas Programme of Action and whose most recent manifestation was the Tehran Consensus, adopted by the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee at its Tenth Meeting, held in August 2001. The high-level representatives at that Meeting had set themselves five strategic objectives: consolidation of the South-South platform; building stronger South institutions at the global level; bridging the knowledge and information gap; building broad-based partnerships; and mobilizing global support for South-South cooperation. The Tehran Consensus had urged the international community, including the United Nations system, to provide vigorous support, including the requisite financial resources, to South-South cooperation. It had also proposed launching an international decade of South-South cooperation and a United Nations day for South-South cooperation.

33. While South-South cooperation had increased, it was not commensurate with existing capacities or with the commitments undertaken in earlier documents. The countries of the South must exert themselves more, both individually and collectively. However, as clearly pointed out in the Tehran Consensus, the assistance of the international community was indispensable, especially in the financial and technical areas, if the increasing gap between developed and developing countries was to be narrowed. South-South cooperation could not replace North-South cooperation; instead, the two must be mutually supportive. Nor should technical cooperation among developing countries be seen as a panacea for those countries, but rather as one of the important elements for a comprehensive development strategy.

34. Regarding the optimization of South-South cooperation, the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries had reaffirmed at its twelfth session the continued relevance of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. In that connection, the Group of 77 and China appreciated the support provided by the United Nations Development Programme, through the establishment of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, for facilitating the attainment of the objectives of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The separate identity of the Special Unit must be maintained and its programme should be adequately funded at a level commensurate with its mandate. It was also important for the Unit to cooperate closely with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The use of the modality of technical cooperation among developing countries should be mainstreamed in the operational activities for development conducted by the United Nations system so as to strengthen further the capacity of the Special Unit to perform its functions.

35. The Group of 77 and China noted with satisfaction the emerging new initiatives for participation of developed countries in that process, such as triangular arrangements that helped developing countries to overcome scarcity of resources in the implementation of South-South cooperation programmes. It was to be hoped that the Special Unit could promote broad-based partnerships capable of mobilizing additional financial resources. He urged the Special Unit to assist developing countries to adopt and pursue well-articulated national policies on technical cooperation among developing countries and called upon all Governments, United Nations agencies and institutions and multilateral and regional financial institutions to increase the allocation of financial resources and identify new funding modalities to foster South-South cooperation. No development could take place without cooperation within the South and between the South and the North.

36. **Mr. de Ruyt** (Belgium) said that he was speaking on behalf of the European Union, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey.

37. The European Union thanked the Secretary-General for the various reports submitted under agenda item 99. For the European Union, the triennial review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system came at a strategic moment, as it would enable the Committee to formulate a resolution that would help make them a more effective, efficient and accountable instrument. It was particularly fortunate that the review was taking place midway between the Millennium Summit and the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey. The Millennium Declaration and the major conferences of the previous decade had set an ambitious development

agenda; the bodies of the United Nations system, each according to its mandate, individual identity and above all its comparative advantage, must now assist Governments in implementing that agenda. How the funds and programmes and the specialized agencies would help the programme countries to achieve those goals would remain of primary importance to the European Union in the years to come.

38. The European Union was convinced that the multilateral system had an irreplaceable role to play in implementing that common agenda. In that multilateral system, the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies were particularly well-placed: their neutrality and access to global expertise and their dedicated and highly qualified teams made them a more powerful instrument for implementing that agenda than their share of the total multilateral aid budget might suggest. For that reason, the European Union wished to be a major partner of the United Nations bodies; it was by far the largest donor to the operational agencies.

39. The European Union welcomed the progress made since the last triennial review, particularly with regard to coordination between the United Nations operational agencies, strengthening of the resident coordinator system and relations with the Bretton Woods institutions. It welcomed in that context the role of the Office of the United Nations Development Group. Despite that undeniable progress, however, the United Nations system had not yet realized its full potential. Therefore, the European Union hoped that the triennial review would provide an opportunity to reflect further on the measures needed to maximize the results of operational programmes.

40. With regard to the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), the discussion during the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council in July 2001 had shown that Member States had questions about the exact nature of the various programming frameworks, their proliferation and the ensuing transaction costs, the level of ownership by programme countries and the precise link between the programming frameworks of the United Nations and the World Bank. There had been general agreement on the concepts involved in the various instruments and their relationship with development policies of the programme countries. The European Union wished to repeat clearly that the starting point for any allocation of resources must be the national development plan, on the understanding that Governments must take full responsibility for framing their strategies for the achievement of international development goals. In developing countries, particularly the poorest, the national development plan would, in practice, take the form of a poverty reduction strategy paper. Inasmuch as they reflected a national, concerted strategy, realistic goals, quantified indicators, specific measures with figures for their budgetary implications, and a system for monitoring the impact of development programmes on poverty, those strategy papers would be a reference point for the European Union in its development programming, especially for African, Caribbean and Pacific States. It welcomed the interest shown by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in enhanced cooperation with other interested parties and invited the United Nations operational organizations to follow their example.

41. The United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks thus did not in any way replace national development plans, but should be based on them; UNDAFs should, in practice, represent the concerted response of the funds and programmes and of all specialized agencies at the national level, on the understanding that a coordinated response would have a much bigger impact on the ground than isolated interventions by the funds and programmes. UNDAFs could also contribute to a more active commitment by the United Nations operational agencies to sectoral approaches, both on a political and a technical level. The European Union was therefore certain that the triennial review would be able to go beyond the current initial phase in the preparation of the frameworks and that all operational agencies would become involved in their elaboration.

42. In order to be credible, however, national development plans must be based on a comprehensive analysis of the situation, based on the facts and drawn up in a participatory manner. With the introduction of the common country Assessment (CCA), the United Nations system had acquired an instrument which made it possible to assist Governments in making such an analysis and tying it in with the international development goals defined by the Millennium Declaration and the major conferences. The elaboration of a common country assessment called for an efficient resident coordinator system and a more intense dialogue between the United Nations system,

Governments, parliaments and organizations of civil society.

43. While recognizing that it was for the governments of programme countries to take the initiative for coordination and planning, the European Union wished to reaffirm its willingness to contribute to those processes by actively participating in the consultations between donors and governments and by providing financial support for technical assistance and capacity-building projects in the areas of planning and coordination.

44. For some 10 years, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had been highlighting the problem of the lack of harmonization of the procedures of United Nations operational organizations. In the debate of the Economic and Social Council in July, many delegations had singled out the high transaction costs of the aid provided by United Nations agencies, in particular as a result of their differing programming procedures and financial policies, which caused country teams to abandon the setting-up of joint programmes. The European Union would therefore like to give top priority to the subject of harmonization of procedures during the triennial review. Contrary to previous resolutions, the review should define an agenda for the harmonization process by identifying the procedures that needed to be harmonized, clearly establishing responsibilities for implementation and follow-up, and defining a precise calendar for achieving that aim. Among the procedures that could be harmonized as a matter of priority, the European Union was thinking specifically of the devolution and delegation of decision-making powers, financial regulations, procedures for implementing projects, the pooling of services in country offices, and the payment of national project personnel. To that end, the funds and programmes and their respective governing bodies with the assistance of the United Nations Development Group Office should submit their agenda for the harmonization process to the Economic and Social Council no later than 2002 and the United Nations should also become involved in the discussions on the harmonization of procedures that was taking place in the Development Assistance Committee between bilateral donors and the multilateral development banks.

45. The European Union was also following with great interest the introduction of results-based management, which was one of the key elements of the multi-year funding frameworks, whose aim was to contribute to a better targeting of activities, a clearer division of tasks between organizations, a greater impact of operational programmes and better justification of the resources required for those programmes. The European Union was fully in agreement with the Secretary-General when he noted that it was still too early to verify the results of the funding frameworks. It remained confident that the effort would bear fruit, given the better quality of the annual reports of the organizations and the slight increase in the regular resources of the funds and programmes.

46. With regard to financial contributions, the European Union wished to reiterate its basic position on the General Assembly pledging conference. Since the funds and programmes had introduced a multi-year funding framework approach, that practice should be terminated. Accordingly, the European Union would not take part in that year's conference.

47. The European Union was of the view that monitoring and evaluation systems were a vital component of results-based management. The Secretary-General's report on the subject noted a number of weaknesses, in particular shortcomings in the monitoring of projects by country offices and headquarters and major difficulties in learning from the lessons and recommendations of the evaluations, since the institutional memory of United Nations organizations was poor in the field. The European Union therefore considered that the triennial review should emphasize the need to improve monitoring and evaluation systems, in particular by studying how to pool the results of evaluations and the most effective lessons and operating modalities of the various United Nations agencies and how to ensure better distribution in country offices, while not forgetting the lessons and practices from country evaluations and United Nations framework plans for development assistance, as well as how to undertake joint mid-term reviews.

48. The European Union had therefore set as priorities for the triennial review a tangible link between United Nations operational activities and the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration, greater synergy between funds and programmes and between framework plans for development assistance and national plans, measurable progress in the harmonization and simplification of procedures, results-based programming and more effective

monitoring and evaluation systems. It was willing to discuss ways of ensuring the best intergovernmental follow-up of operational activities, to examine ways of reinvigorating the operational segment of the Economic and Social Council, and to contribute to the debates of the Second Committee on those matters.

49. **Mr. Osei-Danquah** (Ghana) said that he associated himself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. It was important to reaffirm the role of United Nations operational activities, particularly in assisting developing countries to achieve the goals of the Millennium Declaration and to meet the challenges of globalization, which in the case of Africa meant supporting the New African Initiative. The Declaration and the Initiative both responded to the necessity for comprehensive and interlinked actions at both national and international levels. A vacuum had been created in terms of either capacity-building or funding in certain vital areas. It was important to ensure that the holistic aspect of operational activities was maintained and further to strengthen the guidance role of the Economic and Social Council.

50. The countries, however, had a primary role to play and the country programmes should therefore respond to their respective demands. It was necessary to intensify capacity-building initiatives in order to enable Governments to coordinate external aid effectively and at less cost. For many developing countries the common country assessment remained a valuable tool; however, both the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework should be used in a flexible manner and should be responsive to prevailing conditions. Since the resources available for operational activities for development were dwindling, every effort must be made to reduce costs and eliminate duplication of activities.

51. There was still room for further measures to simplify and harmonize operational and administrative procedures in order to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions, particularly with regard to the procedures for decentralization, financial management and country programming. His delegation was pleased to note that the Multi-Year Funding Frameworks and the Strategic Results Frameworks had contributed to sharpening the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes. Nevertheless, the volume of available resources was a determining factor. Moreover, the further improvement of United Nations operational activities would require a better delineation of the roles of executive boards and an improvement in the systems for submitting reports to the Economic and Social Council. Deepening partnerships with other multilateral bodies and expanding interactions with civil society and the private sector would also contribute to improving the effectiveness of United Nations operational activities.

52. **Mr. Dauth** (Australia) said that he welcomed the improvements made to the United Nations development system, particularly in terms of coherence, coordination and effectiveness in the field. However, United Nations development activities should be integrated more closely into national policies and programmes. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework was an indispensable tool to enable Governments to exercise more direct control over the programmes being carried out. It was also necessary to increase capacity at the national level in such areas as development planning and coordination and to enhance the capacity to take into account lessons learned across the United Nations system.

53. His delegation fully supported recommendations aimed at harmonizing existing coordination frameworks and improving collaboration between United Nations specialized agencies, the World Bank and other multilateral and regional institutions. The harmonization and simplification of systems between the various United Nations agencies, both in the field and at headquarters level, were also necessary, with a view to making cost savings and reducing burdens on programme countries, particularly small island developing States such as those in the South Pacific. The report of the Secretary-General called for increased core funding to sustain reforms. His delegation believed that core funding was dependent on improved results in the field. It was important to acknowledge that donors too faced funding constraints and competing priorities. Resources had to be targeted as effectively as possible in order to maximize development programme benefits and thus attract additional resources. It was also necessary to continue efforts towards broadening the traditional donor base.

54. He expressed concern over references in the English version of the report of the Secretary-General to the forthcoming conference on financing for development as a forum for gaining renewed consensus

and commitment on financing United Nations development cooperation. It was in fact a conference to explore the best ways of harnessing domestic and international financing for development, and not a conference on financing United Nations activities.

55. In conclusion, he said that the initiatives outlined in the report of the Secretary-General offered a constructive way of advancing the reform of the United Nations development system. Increased partner country ownership, enhanced coordination within the United Nations system and other development partners, and above all improved performance on the ground would be valuable indicators of the effectiveness of the United Nations over the forthcoming three-year period.

56. **Mr. Isakov** (Russian Federation) said that the work of the United Nations funds and programmes to implement General Assembly resolution 53/192 and to promote reform of operational activities was on the whole satisfactory. Over the last three years, there had been positive developments in the coordination of operational activities, both at Headquarters and in the field, and in the strengthening of the resident coordinator system. The United Nations Development Group had both intensified its work and expanded its membership. The use of instruments such as the common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework had contributed to more effective inter-agency coordination in the field, and had provided a closer link between programme activities of the operational agencies and national development plans and priorities. The new funding strategy, based on a system of multi-year planning and direct linkage between the volume of resources allocated to recipient countries and the effectiveness of their use of technical assistance, had begun to bear fruit. The decline in UNDP core resources had been reversed and the overall financial situation of UNICEF and UNFPA had improved. Notable progress had been made in reinforcing cooperation between the United Nations operational agencies, the World Bank and IMF. The Russian Federation was convinced that the strengthening of dialogue among those institutions and further work to enhance complementarity between CCA and UNDAF, on the one hand, and comprehensive development frameworks and poverty reduction strategy papers, on the other, could be extremely beneficial to the countries concerned.

57. In spite of such undeniable progress, reform of United Nations operational activities was far from complete. As far as his delegation was concerned, the most important thing was to continuously make adjustments according to the impact of the reforms. His Government supported the main conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/320), which were aimed at improving the methodology of assessing the impact of operational activities and strengthen the role of Governments in the management and implementation of country programmes. His delegation shared the concern expressed in the report about the continuing difficulty in mobilizing core resources to finance operational activities. The executive boards of United Nations funds and programmes and the main bodies of the United Nations, primarily the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, should pay close attention to the problem. The resolution on the triennial policy review to be adopted at the current session, should outline specific steps to further raise the effectiveness of operational activities in the interest of recipient countries.

58. The Russian Federation attached great importance to the strengthening of technical and economic cooperation among developing countries (TCDC/ECDC) as an integral part of international cooperation for development. It commended the work of the Special Unit for TCDC and efforts to integrate TCDC into operational activities for development within regular budget appropriations for technical cooperation and supported the recommendations of the twelfth session of the High-level Committee on the Review of TCDC. The mechanisms for trilateral cooperation implemented within the framework TCDC with the participation of countries in transition were promising.

59. **Mr. Bishnoi** (India) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The report of the Secretary-General stressed the need for coherence with national policies and programmes. However, the United Nations funds and programmes varied considerably in their response to the priorities of developing countries. UNDP, as the flagship for development activities within the United Nations system, ranked governance, poverty eradication, environmental protection, gender equality and special development situations among its priorities. Those priorities represented a donor-driven agenda which, regrettably, did not take the views of programme countries into account. While the

importance of good governance was undeniable, the advice of a donor might be construed as criticism of Governments, systems or cultures of the South. As regards the environment, India believed that the unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in industrialized countries were responsible for the current state of the environment; it was therefore not possible for his Government to recognize the validity of a framework which seemed increasingly to give greater priority to regulatory environmental regimes than to poverty eradication. With respect to the goal of poverty eradication, he said that UNDP seemed to assign as much of its resources to policy advice as it did to expanding the assets of the poor. He wondered whether it was legitimate for UNDP to offer advice, particularly since the distinction between advice and conditionality often became blurred. India supported micro-interventions for they provided replicable solutions and also had the potential to influence macroeconomic policies. Turning to special development situations, which represented a new area of UNDP concern, he said that India would not want to see already scarce resources for development diverted to areas such as peacekeeping and crisis and post-conflict situations.

60. The organizational priorities of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), including girls' education, immunization, combating human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and protecting children from violence, were laudable goals; the projects were a blend of technical assistance, capacity-building, small-scale funding, support for basic services and advocacy and policy support. However, his delegation considered that the welfare of children could not be achieved through good governance alone; it was also necessary to give food to the hungry and medical assistance to the sick. Poverty eradication was an essential prerequisite for respect for human rights, not vice versa. His delegation also shared the priorities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), such as reproductive health, a balance between population dynamics and social and economic development, and women's empowerment, which it sought to promote through capacity-building and advocacy. He particularly applauded the Fund's efforts to find a balance between universal principles, national aspirations and cultural identities. On the other hand, the resources of the World Food Programme (WFP) were increasingly directed towards emergency assistance at the expense of development projects. While emergency assistance was of great value, it was important not to neglect to provide food aid to the poor so that they could take advantage of development opportunities. Furthermore, the Programme's recourse to directed multilateral funding detracted from the spirit of multilateralism.

61. A critical look at the operational activities of the United Nations system showed that the imposition of a donor-driven agenda would compromise the legitimacy of multilateralism. Programme countries could not identify with an agenda in whose shaping they had not been involved. India's voluntary contributions were proof of its commitment to participation in the activities of the funds and programmes. Its total contribution to the core resources of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP for 2000 amounted to US$ 6 million, more than that of any other developing country.

62. Lastly, his delegation endorsed most of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/320). However, with regard to recommendation 6, he wondered whether the Economic and Social Council had any mandate to provide guidance to bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. He was also unable to accept the paragraph in recommendation 8 which called for harmonization of the coordinating frameworks of different multilateral institutions since the frameworks established by financial institutions were often based on additional conditionalities to which his Government could not agree. Lastly, he could not support recommendation 17 if it was to have the effect of subordinating the development role of the United Nations to the requirements of conflict prevention and peace-building.

63. **Mr. Popkov** (Belarus) said that his delegation saw operational activities for development as a key instrument in resolving at the national level many current problems that hindered States' development in the economic, social, cultural and other fields and were often a consequence of the fact that not all States were able to use the potential for economic growth created by globalization and scientific and technical progress to overcome their difficulties.

64. In that regard, his delegation supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive

policy review of operational activities for development (A/56/320), which were aimed at strengthening the operational role of the United Nations development system in order to help countries to better adapt to the effects of globalization and to better integrate into the global economy in order to speed up their development and reduce their poverty. Those recommendations were in the spirit of the primary provisions of the Millennium Declaration.

65. His delegation noted the importance that the report of the Secretary-General attached to establishing a platform for future United Nations activities in the field of development cooperation. In his view, the report reflected both activities associated with the ongoing reform of the system of operational activities and problems of implementation faced by the Organization. The solution to difficulties encountered at the level of implementation lay largely in the harmonization of development activities with corresponding national priorities established with the active participation of the governments of recipient countries and other national partners. In that regard, the report rightly stressed the need to establish a close link between operational activities and national development policies and programmes and to strengthen cooperation with the governments of recipient countries.

66. Generally speaking, his delegation supported the use of the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which should increase the impact of operational activities at the country level. However, it shared the view of States which had mentioned the need to increase national involvement in all stages of the preparation and implementation of the provisions of those documents as a prerequisite for their wider use. Furthermore, the new planning methods at the national level had not yet been recognized by all United Nations bodies that carried out operational activities.

67. With regard to problems relating to the mobilization of resources, he said that agencies undertaking operational activities within the framework of the United Nations system should make it a priority to ensure an adequate level of funding for core resources, while maintaining their characteristic universality, neutrality and professionalism. Only a regular and adequate flow of funds for core resources could ensure genuine predictability in the financing of country programmes and the full implementation of mandates. Other sources of funding should not, however, be neglected.

68. He expressed satisfaction with the level of cooperation which had been established between UNDP, UNICEF and his Government within the framework of the programmes and projects under way in Belarus. Implementation of the cooperation programme for 2001-2004 was yielding positive results. Six new projects involving operational activities to meet various objectives, and also reflecting national priorities, had been approved. His Government was especially grateful to UNDP for the interest it had shown in the mobilization of resources to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. The disaster was a sustainable-development matter, and his Government was relying on uninterrupted support from not only UNDP but also other United Nations agencies in dealing with it in the future. With regard to cooperation with UNICEF, the principal activities undertaken within the framework of the general action plan adopted in 2000 by his Government and UNICEF had been successful, and his Government looked forward to further developing its cooperation with the Fund.

69. **Mr. Shimmura** (Japan) said that he wished to deal with three aspects of operational activities: the results-based approach, national ownership, and effectiveness and efficiency.

70. First, operational activities must achieve good results with respect to development; it was not enough merely to carry out activities according to plan. That was why his delegation emphasized a results-based approach and believed that a report should be prepared on the specific results of each activity and on its implementation status and should include a financial statement, against which the effectiveness of the activity could be evaluated.

71. Second, operational activities should not be imposed on recipient countries, and national ownership must be fully respected by the United Nations system and other donors. The Government had a leadership role to play in the analysis of its country's development needs and the creation of a national development framework. It could then make full use of its own development framework in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or the frameworks of other multilateral organizations.

72. Third, decentralization must be promoted and the role of the resident coordinator must be strengthened in order to ensure more efficient coordination at the field level. He welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations system in that regard, together with the emphasis put on collaboration with the specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions. However, such aid coordination methods must serve the objective of promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of operational activities, and it was therefore important to take into account both the costs and benefits of such measures in order to avoid excessive administrative costs. It was also important to have a variety of policy tools so that each developing country could choose the best policy mix to meet its needs.

73. His Government understood the importance of operational activities conducted with the regular resources of the United Nations agencies and provided strong financial support to them every year. It was the second largest contributor to United Nations funds and programmes, the largest donor to the core resources of UNDP and the second largest donor to UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP. That said, his delegation strongly hoped that United Nations agencies would continue their efforts to attract new donors.

74. His Government actively promoted South-South cooperation as an effective means of transferring knowledge and technology. Given the diversity of culture, language and social structure in the world, technical cooperation was often more effective among people with similar cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. Bearing that in mind, his Government had expanded its South-South cooperation programme over the years, undertaking cooperation activities in Thailand, Mexico and Brazil among other countries. It was gratifying to note also that many developing countries were likewise actively sharing their knowledge and experiences with other developing countries through South-South cooperation. Finally, he expressed his delegation's appreciation for the enormous efforts made by UNDP's Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

75. **Ms. Núñez Mordoche** (Cuba) said that her delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Many initiatives had been taken to improve the efficiency of the funds and programmes, including the merging of certain funds and programmes, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the resident coordinator system and United Nations House. However, the basic problem was the shortage of financial resources. Her delegation was concerned over the steady decline in the core resources of the funds and programmes with donors showing a preference for supplementary resources which were on the increase, with the risk that activities which were vital to the development of recipient countries would take a back seat to low-priority activities. Moreover, it should be noted that the setting of priorities was an inalienable right of recipient States and her delegation was opposed to the imposition of conditions in exchange for assistance. The multilateral nature, neutrality, universality and identity of the funds and programmes should be preserved. The declining trend in core resources should also be reversed while the financing of development activities should be on a stable, secure and predictable basis if the targets set were to be achieved.

76. The world was currently characterized by a rapid growth in trade in goods, capital, information and technologies; at the same time, poverty and marginalization were on the rise, ODA was shrinking and the external debt was becoming unbearable. Globalization had heightened disparities between developed and developing countries and cooperation among developing countries, especially technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), was more important than ever. Cuba, a third world country, assigned considerable importance to TCDC and believed it had a duty to demonstrate its solidarity with countries of the South. Despite the tight economic, trade and financial blockade imposed on her country for over 40 years, thousands of Cuban experts and specialists had provided technical cooperation to tens of countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean in sectors such as health, agriculture, education or sports. Moreover, during the special session of the General Assembly devoted to HIV/AIDS, Cuba had made available to the poorest countries and those most affected by the disease, doctors and health personnel, professors with a view to establishing faculties of medicine, doctors, teachers and psychologists to help with AIDS prevention campaigns, as well as treatment for 30,000 patients. Cuba had also established a Latin American school of medical sciences which admitted over 5,000 students from different countries of the region, including

members of ethnic minorities of the United States of America, who could study there free of charge.

77. **Mr. Hassan** (Pakistan) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Operational activities played an important role in promoting development and it was through such activities that the United Nations really came into contact with the people of the whole world. Over the past few years, there had been a considerable diversification in operational activities. The goal of development was being pursued in a broader perspective which required a coherent approach. While there certainly was a need for linkages between the various dimensions of development, operational activities should nevertheless be flexible enough to respond to specific national development requirements. In other words, the process should remain country-driven and demand-driven. It was also worth recalling that the strength of operational activities stemmed from their universal, voluntary and grant nature as well as their neutrality and multilateralism. There was a widely shared view that operational activities should be increasingly focused on providing support in the coordinated follow-up to global conferences. In other words, the internationally agreed strategies and targets should be integrated into such activities. In so doing, one should not lose sight of the fact that governments were the key actors in that regard.

78. The United Nations faced a number of challenges in the area of development cooperation. The key issue, however, was inadequate resources. To ensure that operational activities better responded to the increasing needs of developing countries, sufficient resources should be provided on a secure and predictable basis. It was disturbing, however, to note that the core resources of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA had been declining for about a decade. On the other hand, while the total amount of resources available to the United Nations system in its regular budget for operational activities for development was constantly declining, there was a trend towards increased earmarked funding for operational activities, making such activities donor-driven rather than demand-driven.

79. Donor countries had made the increase in funding subject to a marked improvement in the efficiency of operational activities. His delegation believed that there had been a tremendous improvement in that regard over the last three years, particularly in UNDP. It was also undeniable that all sides were willing to vigorously continue efforts to further increase efficiency. However, that had not resulted in any increase in voluntary contributions. There would always be room for improvement, but that should not be used as an open-ended pretext for withholding funds.

80. The donor community also cited a difficult domestic political climate or an economic slowdown as justification for its inability to commit the requisite funds. Surprisingly, the budgetary restrictions applied only to the funds given to the core budget of the United Nations system. At the same time, the funds and programmes were reporting a sharp increase in their non-core resources. For obvious reasons, bilateral channels were given precedence over multilateral operations. Another argument being promoted was the "privatization of development cooperation", in which connection the concentration of private capital raised serious concerns. Capital sought high rates of return and was rarely invested with altruistic motives. Even if it was accepted that it could be geared towards development, its unpredictability and volatility made it highly unreliable. It was therefore imperative that the donor community should recognize its differentiated responsibilities in realizing the goal of universal development and providing the necessary resources for operational activities.

81. It had been hoped that the multi-year funding framework would ensure the provision of funds for operational activities on a more predictable, assured and continuous basis and would also encourage donors progressively to increase their pledges. Unfortunately, that had not happened. The fact was that no funding strategy could ensure adequate funding unless accompanied by the necessary political will.

82. Pakistan supported the processes aimed at enhancing coordination and cooperation among various funds and programmes, such as CCA and UNDAF, on the understanding that the fundamental principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 53/192 were given priority. Moreover, CCA and UNDAF would not be considered as binding for the operational activities of the United Nations, as they still represented a pilot project. Nonetheless, he supported the proposal to request the Secretary-General to undertake further evaluation of those two processes.

83. Concerning the activities of the United Nations Development Group, his country's position was that they should be demand-driven and country-driven towards the overall fulfilment of the Group's basic objective of poverty eradication. Moreover, those activities should not affect the performance of UNDP.

84. In principle, Pakistan supported the idea of forging greater cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, regional development banks, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in pursuit of development goals. However, in deciding upon specific mechanisms of coordination, it was important to ensure that the relevant mandates and principles were respected, particularly in regard to matters of universality and neutrality. The overspill of conditionalities from the Bretton Woods institutions to projects being carried out by United Nations development organizations should be strictly avoided. The latter were expected to play a role which was qualitatively distinct from other development partners, and endeavours should therefore be made to preserve that role.

85. Although TCDC was an important aspect of the operational activities of the United Nations system, it had been neglected. He therefore strongly urged the organizations of the United Nations to integrate that modality into the framework of their development cooperation.

86. **Mr. Shen** Guofang (China) endorsed the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He pointed out that, irrespective of the worldwide changes with regard to development, United Nations operational activities must maintain their universality, neutrality, multilateralism, flexibility, and voluntary and grant nature and continue to play their unique role in national capacity-building and poverty eradication. China believed the purpose of those activities was to help developing countries to accelerate their socio-economic development. They must therefore adhere to the country-driven principle and conform to the specific needs of countries and to their development policy priorities so as to give recipient countries a stronger sense of ownership.

87. The Millennium Summit had heralded a new era for operational activities for development. It was now time for concrete action. Firstly, developing countries should rank their development priorities and draw up a timetable for poverty eradication appropriate to their respective national context. Secondly, the international community should elaborate achievable assistance plans based on a study of the specific needs of recipient countries. Thirdly, donors should fulfil their political commitments and increase ODA in order to ensure a solid financial base for the successful realization of poverty eradication goals. To date, no significant progress had been achieved with regard to any of those three aspects. The core resources of all the United Nations funds and programmes for development had declined or stagnated. Over recent years, operational activities for development had been weakened gradually rather than strengthened, a situation which was incompatible with the growing needs of recipients. China hoped that the United Nations development system would continue to do its utmost to reverse that worrying trend as quickly as possible; otherwise it would be difficult to achieve the goals set by the Millennium Summit.

88. China supported the efforts made by the United Nations development system to improve coordination and effectiveness, which had led to the formulation of CCA and UNDAF and to the establishment of common premises in some countries. However, some of the existing frameworks within the system were very similar. In order to avoid overlapping and confusion, it would be better to retain only those frameworks which had been recognized by recipient countries and had proved their effectiveness. They could be continuously improved in the light of experience.

89. China had always participated in the process of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries and intended to strengthen its participation in future. It supported the idea of integrating TCDC/ECDC into the activities of the United Nations funds and programmes for development. Assistance from the developed countries was also essential in that context.

90. **Ms. Campos** (Venezuela) endorsed the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. She recalled that the richer and more powerful countries had a responsibility to contribute to the development of poorer countries. In 1969 donor countries had been urged to allocate at least 0.7 per cent of GNP to development assistance. Only five countries had achieved that objective and the average was still quite low (0.24 per cent) for the 22 countries belonging to the Development Assistance Committee.

91. Venezuela believed that funding of operational activities should continue to be based on core resources and that it was important to redistribute those resources in a just and equitable manner, so that each recipient country obtained assistance according to its needs, including countries, like Venezuela, which were medium-income countries.

92. The Venezuelan Government was aware of the importance of South-South cooperation, in particular technical and economic cooperation among developing countries, because it provided viable opportunities for development. The executive boards of the funds and programmes must therefore look at resources earmarked for TCDC activities and take steps to increase them. South-South cooperation was in fact a vital instrument for the promotion and strengthening of the economic independence of developing countries, and it ensured the equitable and effective participation of those countries in the world economic order. The Venezuelan Government supported the strengthening of such cooperation, in particular through its participation, for over 20 years, in a programme which brought together Caribbean States for cooperation in the areas of agricultural development, health and technical training. Furthermore, like Mexico, it was implementing the San José Agreement guaranteeing energy supply to Central American and Caribbean countries, as well as financial and technical assistance on preferential terms.

93. The Venezuelan Government supported the efforts of the United Nations system, particularly of UNDP and UNFPA. It was aware that the major responsibility lay with the vital elements within the country but acknowledged that it needed the support of the United Nations specialized agencies, which must have at their disposal sufficient resources to be able to organize and coordinate cooperation with developing countries.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.